

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 16032

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PEPR, ECON, JA, KS

SUBJECT: JAPAN-ROK MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

REF: SEOUL 7851

SUMMARY: JAPANESE ASSESS POSITIVELY RESULTS OF 10TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN SEOUL. EXCHANGES ON SIGNIFICANCE OF PFT FOR FUTURE JAPANESE POLICY TOWARD PENINSULA WERE THOUGHT TO BE USEFUL, AND RESULTING COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE WAS QUITE SATISFACTORY FROM GOJ POINT OF VIEW. ON TAKESHIMA/TOKYO, IT WAS AGREED WORKING LEVEL DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE HELD TO ADDRESS FISHERIES PROBLEMS IN THE AREA. ECONOMIC SUBJECTS WERE MINOR ASPECT OF TALKS BUT HIGHLIGHTED TRADE IMBALANCE AND PROSPECTIVE DECREASE IN JAPANESE AID TO RAPIDLY ADVANCING ROK ECONOMY. END SUMMARY

1. JAPANESE, TOO, WERE PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF 10TH JAPAN-CONFIDENTIAL

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ROK MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE HELD IN SEOUL SEPTEMBER 3-4 (REFTEL). SPEAKING TO EMBOFFS SEPTEMBER 5, MOFA NE ASIA DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR MOCHIZUKI SAID KOREANS PRESSED FOR ASSURANCES IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE THAT JAPAN'S BASIC POLICIES TOWARD KOREAN PENINSULA WOULD NOT BE CHANGED BY SINO-JAPANESE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY (PFT) AND WERE DELIGHTED WITH LANGUAGE ON THIS SUBJECT IN COMMUNIQUE. FOR

THEIR PART, JAPANESE WERE PLEASED WITH KOREAN EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT SINO-JAPANESE TREATY WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN EAST ASIA. THIS WAS FIRST PUBLIC OFFICIAL REFERENCE TO PFT BY ROK, AND MOFA APPRECIATED ITS POSITIVE TONE.

2. MOCHIZUKI SAID MOFA REGRETTED HEADLINES IN JAPANESE PRESS REFERRING TO FONMIN SONODA'S COMMENTS AT SUNDAY'S PLENARY SESSION ON NORTH KOREA TO EFFECT THAT JAPAN WAS INTERESTED IN SEEKING CONTACTS WITH DPRK. ACCORDING TO MOCHIZUKI, STORIES WERE RESULT OF INACCURATE BRIEFING TO JAPANESE PRESS BY MEMBER OF JAPANESE EMBASSY SEOUL, COMPOUNDED BY TYPICAL JAPANESE PRESS EMBELLISHMENT. IN FACT, SAID MOCHIZUKI, SONODA HAD SAID NOTHING ABOUT FUTURE JAPANESE CONTACTS WITH BORTH KOREA AT PLENARY SESSION, BUT RATHER HAD REAFFIRMED THAT JAPANESE POLICY TOWARD KOREAN PENINSULA WOULD NOT CHANGE IN WAKE OF PFT SIGNING.

3. QUESTION OF TAKESHIMA/TOKTO WAS RAISED AT COUNTERPART MEETING BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTERS. ACCORDING TO MOFA, BOTH SIDES AGREED TO SEPARATE TERRITORIAL ISSUE FROM THAT OF FISHERIES PROBLEM. THEY FURTHER AGREED TO HOLD "CONVERSATIONS" AT WORKING LEVEL TO INSURE "GOOD ORDER" IN SEA AROUND ISLANDS. IT IS JAPANESE UNDERSTANDING THAT THESE CONVERSATIONS WILL BE AIMED AT SMOOTHING WAY FOR JAPANESE FISHING WITHIN SOUTH KOREA'S 12-MILE TERRITORIAL WATERS, CONFIDENTIAL

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DECLARED BY ROK LAST APRIL 30.

4. ECONOMIC ISSUES RECEIVED LIGHT COVERAGE. MOCHIZUKI NOTED THAT EACH SIDE HAD CONCEDED TO THE OTHER AFTER INITIAL RESISTANCE ONE POINT IN COMMUNIQUE: JAPANESE ACKNOWLEDGED EXISTENCE OF BILATERAL TRADE IMBALANCE (A SUBJECT TO BE DEALT WITH MORE CONCRETELY IN BILATERAL MEETINGS ON TRADE ISSUES TO BE HELD TOWARD END OF THIS YEAR); KOREANS AFFIRMED MOVEMENT FROM GOVERNMENTAL TOWARD PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPHASIS IN ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN JAPAN AND ROK. THIS LATTER TREND IN CHARACTER OF JAPAN-ROK ECONOMIC RELATIONS, WHICH IN COMMUNIQUE WAS SET IN PERSPECTIVE OF ROK'S RECENT RAPID ECONOMIC GROWTH, WAS IMPLICIT IN JAPAN'S AUGUST 10 PLEDGE OF YEN 21 BILLION IN DEVELOPMENT AID TO KOREA FOR FISCAL 1978 (APRIL 1978-MARCH 1979). THAT AMOUNT FALLS SHORT OF PREVIOUS THREE FISCAL YEARS' CORRESPONDING COMMITMENTS WHICH HAD RANGED AROUND YEN 24 BILLION EACH. MOFA OFFICERS NOTED JAPANESE HAVE EARMARKED YEN 7 BILLION OF PLANNED FISCAL 1978 ASSISTANCE FOR HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SAID GOJ PLANNED TO EMPHASIZE SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN FUTURE AID TO KOREA.

5. GOJ VIEWS ON POSSIBILITY OF PAK-FUKUDA SUMMIT WILL BE
REPORTED SEPTEL. MANSFIELD

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